



Small Farmers Opportunities for Direct Marketing to Consumers and Retailers

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How and Who to do you want to sell

- Direct to consumers
 - Farmers' Markets
 - Restaurants
- Wholesale
 - Distribution
 - Manufacturing
- Retail
 - Own shop or booth



Direct...Farmers' Markets

- 2011 there were 7,175
- 2014 there are 8,268
 - Cooking / Taste demos

- In 2008 KY AGR carried out taste demos in markets in Northern KY
- Prior to demo aprox. 395 units were sold/wk
- During Demos, 4,076 units were sold
- 3 Weeks after demo, 1,526 were sold weekly

So this data shows that tasting demo help sell product and sales continue.

- One-on-one with customers



Why farmers' market success?

- Want to talk about their farm and activities
- Want to get to know their customers
- Want to sell the freshest and prettiest products
- Are very display conscious
- They want to make money
 - Be ready for some negative comments

Farmers' Markets....

- Be prepared!
- Have contact info for future purchases
- Supply recipes
- Compliment with other products available at the market during demos.
- Mostly have fun, and people will buy your products

Restaurants...want local and fresh

- Want to highlight your farm and activities
- Local foods let you be creative with your menu and offer more variety.
- Local foods protect the environment.
- Local foods aren't as expensive as you think.
 - Know what your are selling: how it is grown, harvested, what does it eat and how is it prepared.

CSA ~Community Supported Agriculture

- CSA's - Community Supported Fisheries - have sprouted in coastal communities around the country, giving fishermen a little more income as a way to sell their catches directly to quality conscious consumers.
- Now a Long Island based CSA has expanded that to a restaurant model, enlisting New York Chefs who pay \$2500 per month for a selection of 100 lbs of seafood delivered weekly, including both premium and 'trash' fish.
- Fish Farmers can do this!!!

How are you going to sell... Whole or Processed

- What are the requirements
- What are your resources
 - Local processing/MPU



People Love Local!

Consumers are searching for it!
Chefs are responding!



Wholesale Distributors

- Large volume
- Lower price
- Higher specs
 - Size
 - Packaging
 - Grading
- One stop
- One billing



Keys to Success

- Determination
- Creativity
- Listen well to others
- Watch the Market
- Know competition
- Good Management
- Good communication
- Follow through
- Know your limitations



Determination

- Know what you want to accomplish
- Know your time line for each step
- Know what is needed to achieve
- Who/What do you need to know
 - Safety, health, zoning, shipping
- Who do you need to work with
 - State, federal, neighbors, brokers, family

Creativity

- Looking for other opportunities
- Ask; Why should anyone buy this?
- Always look at current market trend
 - Can you adapt this to your product or marketing campaign
 - Can you create a different product to fulfill
 - Low Carb
 - Ready made meals
 - Part of the industry needs: hatchery/stockers

Know your customers

- Who are they?
- What is their average income?
- What do they usually spend on specialty products?
- How do they historically prepare similar products?
 - Will that meet your price point?
 - Live, Fresh, Processed, Value-added

Listen well to others..

- What does your customer want
- What can you accomplish with what your resources are
- Be open to suggestions and research them well



Watch the Market

- What are consumers buying
- What are the trends
 - Packaging
 - Portions
 - Marketing campaigns
 - Season
 - Lent, Valentines day, Thanksgiving, 4th of July
 - Plan your market accordingly



Know competition

- What are the specials they are running
- Can you compliment other products and companies
 - Sauces and Marinades
 - Percentage of a ready made meal



Good Management

- Treat your staff well
- Manage your billing and suppliers well
- Treat your customers with respect
- Nurture your relationships with business people
 - Customers
 - Suppliers
 - Business partners
- Do not neglect your family!

Good communication

- Listen well
- Make your customers feel like they are your first priority
- Reiterate understanding in making deals
- Follow up with a descriptive letter/email
- Keep all communication lines open and be willing to assist them during difficult times
 - Suppliers and customers
 - Assist your customers/brokers to communicate your message well
 - Why your product stands out

Follow through

- Follow all trade leads
- Return all phone calls in a timely manner
- If a problem arises and it will take time, let them know that it is being dealt with and check in with them from time to time
- If you can not service that request, make other suggestions and referrals
 - This will create a trusting relationship

Know your limitations!

- Do not over commit
- Do not make false promises
- Be honest
- If you are not good with the public, get someone that is good to be your front line person

Conclusion

- Talk to people
- Do your research on who your customers are, where they are and what their needs are
- Be prepared

Thank You

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